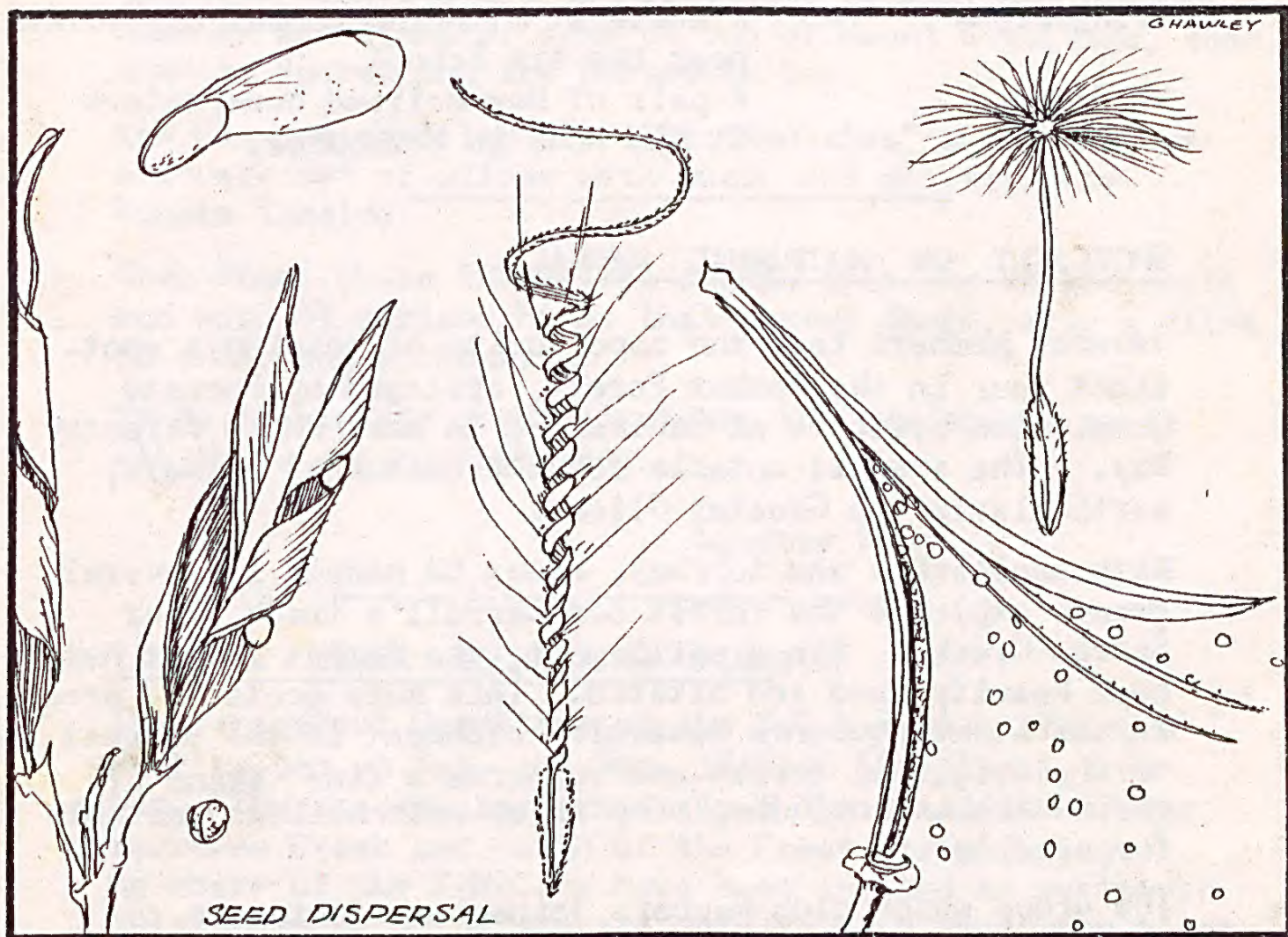


APRIL 1982

Field Naturalists Club of Ballarat

EXCURSION - NEWS SHEET

- Meeting 2nd April - "Getting Away from it All - Plantwise."
Dr.J.H.Willis.
- Meeting 7th May - "The Atlas of Australian Birds"
Mr.T.Garnet.
- Excursion 4th April - Sunday - Half day: Enfield Forest.
Leader Mrs.P.Murphy.
- Excursion 2nd May - Sunday - Full day: Brisbane Ranges.
Leader Mr.L.Fink.
(Note date 2nd May - due to school holidays)



President: Dr. F. HARRAP	Phone 30 1651
Vice-pres: Mrs. M. ROTHERAM	Phone 31 4054
Secretary: Miss H. BURGESS	Phone 31 2210
Treasurer: Mr. S. REYNOLDS	Phone 32 7721
Editor Mr. J. NETHERWAY	Phone 32 7296

Meetings, as specified, are held in the Administration Building of the School of Mines and Industries, Lydiard Street South, Ballarat, commencing 8 pm.

EXCURSIONS, AS SPECIFIED, COMMENCE FROM CROCKERS, Cnr. STURT and ARMSTRONG STREETS, BALLARAT. AT 9.30 am FOR FULL DAY OUTINGS. OR AT 1.30 pm FOR HALF DAY.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS - are now due: \$4 single, \$8 family \$1 full-time student.

NEW MEMBERS, Mrs Valerie Hocking and Mr. John Earnshaw were welcomed by the President who wished them a long and happy association with the Club.

REPORTS (5/3/82)

Miss McNabb -	Sighting two koalas in Walker St. late in February.
Miss Burgess -	A koala feeding on a scentbark, Eucalyptus aramaphloia in her garden.
Dr. Harrup -	A koala at Mt. Helen campus of B.C.A.E near the Art School.
Mr. Hammond -	A pair of New Holland honeyeaters at his home in Wendouree.

SPOTLIGHT ON NOCTURNAL MAMMALS.

Several members took the opportunity of joining a spotlight tour in the Wombat Forest, arranged by Forests Commission officers at Daylesford to mark World Forestry Day. The area is notable for its nocturnal animals, particularly the Greater Glider.

With spotlights and torches, about 50 people in several groups explored the forest off Carroll's track, near Spargo Creek. Since settlement, the Wombat Forest has been heavily used and altered. This more protected area in the Korweinguboorra Reservoir catchment is the nearest to the original forest and supports a fine stand of varied timber including many trees with hollows suitable for nesting.

The group which club members joined was fortunate to have excellent sightings of the Greater Glider, notable for its size, large membrane and black bushytail: a small Feathertail Glider, Ringtail Possum and Bushy Tail Possum. After the walk, an enjoyable supper was served in the Korweinguboorra Football Club Rooms.

M. Rotheram.

MARCH MEETING 5.3.82

This was Members' Night and many of the members took this opportunity to show some of their favourite slides.

Harvey Hooper gave a short but informative talk on begonias, in fact it was a lesson in botany. This was mainly directed to our younger members, but I feel some older members may have learned something also.

Lyndsay Fink showed slides of rain-forests, peregrine falcon's egg and young, and showed also some of our campout trips, mainly to Donald and the Otways.

Frank Harrup's slides were of rain forests in the Mount Lamington National Park which is a very beautiful area, also Lake Hattah in the Mallee, and Lake Mungo where our oldest aboriginal relics are found.

Florence Williamson's contributions were of the Alpine country and flowers, some on top of Mount Kosciasko, then down to Buchan and the Dartmouth Dam.

Ken Hammond entitled his talk "Memories" and showed us a lovely set of slides with music and whistling by Ronnie Ronalde.

Greg Binns chose the Clunes swamps area and showed nests and eggs of various birds that nested there, also a slide of a Coorong echidna.

We do appreciate members' night, and our thanks go to all those who contributed.

Lyndsay Fink.

YARROWEE CREEK RECREATION PARK.

The Management Committee of the Y.C.R.P. is holding a working-bee on Sat. and Sun. 17th and 18th April from 9am. The area to be worked is on the west side of the Yarrowee Creek and north of the Prest Street Bridge. Members of the F.N.C.B. have been invited to assist in this project. If you are able to help would you please take your own lunch and thermos, gardening tools, and a

bag for rubbish. This will be the initial clean up. The first planting is expected to be on 5th June which is World Environment Day.

THE AIMS OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

1. To create a "passive recreation" park along the banks of the Yarrowee Creek from the Hill Street Bridge to the Buninyong Shire Border.
 2. To plant species known to occur naturally within the Ballarat (Central Highlands) area, to plant according to natural models, and to provide identification and interpretation.
 3. To progressively reduce, and eventually eliminate all noxious weeds.
 4. To ensure that the costs of establishment and maintenance are minimal and are financed mainly from sources other than the Ballarat Council.
 5. To provide opportunities for both voluntary and paid work for anyone with environmental interests.
 - 6 . To provide vehicle access for emergency and service vehicles only.
 7. To encourage use of the area for educational purposes.
 - 8 . To develop strategies and techniques of planting and maintenance which are compatible with the above objectives.
 9. To document all stages of the project.
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MID-WINTER BIRDING IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA 1981.

A mid-winter visit to Western Australia (at a rushed 48 hours notice) coincided with the worst winter Perth had experienced for more than 20 years. Not only was it the off season for flowers (though some were still to be found) but most frustrating for bird observing. I got soaked to the skin on numerous occasions. When frequent and heavy rain made observing impossible, many promising and interesting areas had to be abandoned. A classic example was a journey out to Cape Naturaliste to visit the nesting site of the Red-tailed Tropic Birds. As forecast, gales swept in from the southwest. Stinging salt spray and hail lashed the wild rocky coast around Sugarloaf Rock with a wind you had to lean on. White lime marks aside, there was not a sign of a single bird - they had more sense! Further along the coast I saw a Little Falcon hurtling over the tops of the crashing waves, but this lone forager made the sum total for the morning. Similar though less wild experiences continued through the magnificent kauri, marri and jarrah forests of the southwest, where every stop with the binoculars seemed to invite an upturned reservoir from the skies. Nevertheless I did manage to see a good many birds including a number of species endemic to Western Australia,

Our familiar Red Wattlebird is a very aggressive, noisy and common species in the West, with his raucous chuckling reverberating around the bushland in most favourable bird habitat, particularly in Perth's beautiful natural parks. The most commonly sighted bird, over all, was the New Holland Honeyeater, which assembled in such numbers that at times they became almost tedious. Investigation of a promising rustle in a bush would result in an outburst of these yellow-winged honeyeaters. Unlike Victoria where they seem to feed more quietly in twos or threes, these gathered in flashing, tumbling, garrulous flocks of about 30... fun to watch if they were not so disturbing to other species. Also seen frequently was the Kookaburra, an introduced bird from the east which has established strongly in the West.

WA's White-tailed Black Cockatoo was sighted in big numbers. With white patches on its checks and tail, this is similar to our Yellow-tailed Cockatoo. The first sighting of this bird was most impressive. My son and I stopped at Lake Gnangara on the northern outskirts of Perth to check for waders and heard the noise of a huge flock of birds approaching from the west. As they came into sight they looked rather like a mass of migratory crows, but proved to be about 400 cockatoos, wheeling and screeching overhead in several flocks which would clash like squadrons merge, then part, still screaming. For a time they settled on nearby bushes and gnarled bare trees, flapping and dropping from the branches like baskets of black rags. Eventually they moved off to a pine plantation which they frequent, relishing the seeds. Another spectacular sighting of this bird was at Two People's Bay in the reserve set aside for the conservation of the Noisy Scrub-bird (reported Courier, Sept. 18). A big flock was feeding in a stand of flowering yellow Dryandras, which were also attracting large numbers of the New Holland Honeyeaters and several other species, including the Little Wattlebird and the Western Spinebill. The Western Spinebill is a very attractive bird, more brightly plumaged than the eastern species, with a chestnut throat.

The most delightful bird I saw was the Rufous Treecreeper. Illustrations do not seem to do justice to the richness of its glowing gingery colours or friendly confiding habits. On a misty morning in the Porongorups, a pair flew into the clearing through the low cloud, pecking around a hollow tree and hopping on logs only a few feet from me. In the same area I also saw the spectacularly beautiful little Red-eared Firetail. Similar to our Beautiful Firetail, this has crimson ears, bill and tail, and the abdomen is heavily spotted in black and white. The West's White-breasted Robin became a familiar companion on bush walks, bobbing up almost as regularly as our Eastern Yellow Robin. The Western Yellow Robin, with its little white throat, was also there.

On a wide tidal estuary on the way to Two Peoples Bay,

there was a beautiful spectacle of about 30 Avocet feeding delicately in the shallows and about 50 Blue-billed Duck drifting further out, with two large-billed Caspian Tern resting on the rocks. In Albany I saw the surprising sight of a flock of Sooty Oyster catchers feeding on the lawn! beside a busy causeway next to the reconstructed brig "Amity", a local tourist attraction.

A sizeable bird list, including a number of dry country species new to me included the Western Magpie, Western Thornbill, Broad-tailed Thornbill, Port Lincoln Parrot, or Twentyeight Parrot, Red-capped Parrot, Regent Parrot, White-naped Honeyeater (the Western form) and the Senegal Turtledove, common in suburbs in Perth.

Margaret Rotheram.

Western Victoria Field Naturalists Clubs Assoc. Campout.
Bendigo F.N.C. Campout at Axedale April 24-25th. 1982.

Host Club.

Bendigo Field Naturalists Club. P.O.Box 396, Bendigo.

Location

Axedale Rotary Camp, 24 km east of Bendigo. The camp is situated close to the west bank of the Campaspe River in very pleasant surroundings.

PROGRAMME

Friday evening.

Arrive after 4.p.m. set up camp.

Informal activities for Saturday.

Saturday morning.

Informal activities in the vicinity.

- (a) Birdwatching along the Campaspe River.
- (b) Axedale Fish Farm.
- (c) Lake Eppalock dam wall.
- (d) Sugarloaf Range.

Lunch at 12.00

Saturday Afternoon ,

Depart at 1.00 p.p. for Permian Glaciated pavements at Moorabbee (Lake Eppalock). and the Pink Cliffs at Heathcote, Return by 5.00 p.m.

Saturday evening.

6.30 p.m. W.V.F.N.C.A. delegates meeting.

B.F.N.C.A. sound-slide presentation on the Bendigo area.

8.PM. General meeting, and Launching of Cliff Beagleholes new book.

Welcome address by Chris Bunn B.F.N.C.A. Pres.

Slides and talk "From South-west Tasmania to Cape York"

Supper.

Rob.Watkins.

Sunday Depart 10.00a.m.

All day excursion to Barfold Gorge on the Campaspe River.

If time, side trips to Turpins Falls (Campaspe River) and

Coliban Falls (Coliban River) ,Leaders: L.Leeson, E.Wilkinson.

Return 4.00 p.m.

ACCOMMODATION is dormitory type at Axedale Camp. Four huts with beds and mattresses for 90 people, male and female shower and toilet blocks. Large, well equipped kitchen, a large dining-room, spacious lounge, open fireplace, also recreation hall suitable for meetings.

It is hoped that as many people as possible will use the dormitory accommodation, there is room around the camp for

a limited number of caravans and tents. Please notify

John Lindner (62.Simpsons Rd.Eaglehawk, ph.(054)46 7132

if you intend bringing a caravan or tent, as caretaker

needs warning of likely numbers. Bring long extension leads

if you wish to be connected to electricity supply.

The Camp is NOT available until after 4.p.m on Fri. 23rd Apr.

as another group will be in residence until the early

afternoon, and the caretaker needs time for cleaning.

Site must be vacated by 4.00 P.M. Sunday.

Cost A charge per head will be \$4.50 for two nights, to cover the use of facilities on a self catering basis.

MOTELS

Brolga Hotel-Motel, Lake Eppalock, Kimbolton. Ph(054)392533

All Seasons Motor Inn, Mc Ivor Highway Ph.(054) 438166